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INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA-UAW

DENNIS WILLIAMS, Secretary-Treasurer

March 13, 2014

HB 5527 AN ACT CONCERNING A DOMESTIC WORKERS BILL OF RIGHTS

Good afternoon Senator Holder-Winfield, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor Committee. My name is Beverley Brakeman. I am the political representative for the UAW. On behalf of 13,000 members and our Director Julie Kushner, the UAW Region 9A is proud to support this important proposal. The UAW was involved in the passage of a domestic workers bill of rights in New York and is currently engaged with domestic worker advocates in Massachusetts trying to pass a bill in the Commonwealth.

In Connecticut, there are approximately 40,000 domestic workers who serve as housekeepers, nannies, and caregivers in private homes. Domestic workers are primarily immigrant women who work in private households in order to provide for their own families as the primary income earner. The role of domestic workers is essential to Connecticut as it enables others to participate in the workforce. Without these domestic workers many would be forced to forgo their own jobs to address their household needs, the result being that the well-being of many Connecticut families and the economy as a whole would suffer. However, despite the importance of their work, domestic workers have historically received wages well below the poverty line and continue to be excluded from some of the most fundamental labor protections other workers in Connecticut enjoy.

This proposal as you know will close loopholes in current labor law that has left domestic workers unprotected and adds important new protections under the law.

The UAW strongly urges this committee to pass this bill and help to move it through the legislative process.

Thank you

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